

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

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R 291614Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9334

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY SANAA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 8864

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SCUL EAID US LE JO

SUBJECT: AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT (AUB) EXPELLEES

REF: JERUSALEM 1512

1. FROM EMBASSY'S VANTAGE POINT WOULD APPEAR AUB HAS MADE COMMENDABLE EFFORT TO INSURE THAT THOSE STUDENTS EXPELLED WERE ACTIVISTS AND RING-LEADERS OF ANTI-AUB ADMINISTRATION MOVEMENT IN GENERAL AND THE SPRING STRIKERS IN PARTICULAR. ALTHOUGH NEITHER AUB NOR GOL HAVE MADE PUBLIC RECORD OF FACT, EMBASSY OFFICER WAS TOLD AT TIME OF APR 24 POLICE RAID ON CAMPUS THAT DUE SWIFTNESS AND UNEXPECTEDNESS OF RAID EXTENSIVE WRITTEN RECORDS CITING NAMES OF STUDENTS GIVEN STRIKE ASSIGNMENTS, COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS, ETC., WERE SEIZED. THIS SHOULD HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED SUBJECTIVITY FACTOR IN AUB'S DECISION.

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2. EMBASSY, OF COURSE, HAS NO WAY OF KNOWING EXTENT OF INVOLVEMENT OF ALL THOSE EXPELLED, BUT WHERE IT DOES KNOW HISTORY OF PARTICULAR STUDENT THERE HAS BEEN NO QUESTION OF THAT STUDENT'S CULPABILITY. FOR EXAMPLE, THE ONLY AID-SPONSORED LEBANESE EXPELLED HAD BEEN AMONG THOSE ARRESTED WHEN STRIKE WAS BROKEN AND WAS ACTIVE MEMBER OF DISCREDITED STUDENT COUNCIL. IN ANOTHER CASE, AIDA MATAR, AN EXPELLED AID STUDENT FROM JORDAN (WHO MAY BE ONE OF NIECES REFERRED TO IN REFTEL SINCE HER BIO DATA LISTS HER BIRTHPLACE AS BEIT JALA) IS KNOWN ACTIVIST WHOSE ERRATIC SCHOLASTIC RECORD WOULD PROBABLY HAVE RESULTED IN HER BEING DROPPED FROM AUB FOR ACADEMIC REASONS IN ANY CASE. THE ONLY AMERICAN BUSINESSMAN IN BEIRUT WHO HAS CONTACTED EMBASSY ON SUBJECT OF EXPULSIONS DID SO TO SEEK ADVICE TO PASS ON TO ONE OF HIS PRINCIPAL DISTRIBUTORS IN GULF WHOSE DAUGHTER HAD BEEN EXPELLED. IN COURSE OF CONVERSATION, IT DEVELOPED THAT BOTH THE GIRL'S FATHER AND THE AMERICAN INQUIRER WERE VERY AWARE THAT THE DAUGHTER WAS AMONG THE MOST DESTRUCTIVE RADICAL ELEMENTS.

3. A DEFINITE EFFORT TO MOUNT A PRESS CAMPAIGN AND OTHER SIGNS OF POPULAR SUPPORT FOR EXPELLEES HAS ALREADY BEGUN IN BEIRUT BUT SO FAR IT HAS GONE UP LIKE A LEAD BALLOON. THE UNIVERSITY IS ENJOYING CONSIDERABLE PARENTAL AND COMMUNITY BACKING (IN CONTRAST WITH 1971) FOR FIRM ACTION AGAINST LAST SEMESTER'S POLITICALLY MOTIVATED TROUBLEMAKERS. UNIVERSITY'S CASE IS CERTAINLY BOLSTERED BY MARXIST GRAFFITI LEFT BY THOSE WHO OCCUPIED BUILDING AND BY FACT THAT COST OF STRIKE TO AUB, INCLUDING OVERTIME FOR GUARDS, WANTON PROPERTY DAMAGES AND STOLEN EQUIPMENT IS ESTIMATED AT APPROXIMATELY DOLS 200,000. THIS IS NOT TO MENTION LOSS SUSTAINED BY SUBSTANTIAL PORTION OF STUDENT BODY WHICH WANTED PURSUE THEIR STUDIES BUT WERE PHYSICALLY PREVENTED FROM ATTENDING CLASSES. THERE WERE MANY CASES OF STUDENTS BEING PHYSICALLY THREATENED BY STRIKERS AND A FEW OF THEM BEING MALTREATED. IT IS ALSO BECOMING WELL KNOWN HERE THAT AUB ACTED WITH FULL SUPPORT OF THE LEBANESE PRESIDENT AND MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

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4. COMMENT: POINT WAS QUITE CORRECTLY MADE TO A'ARA' CONCERNING NON-USG INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION (SEE PARA 4 BEIRUT 8495) WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT SITUATION CLEARLY REQUIRED SOME DECISIVE ACTION BY AUB ADMINISTRATION AND THAT ACTION TAKEN, ON BASIS OF EVIDENCE DESCRIBED ABOVE, IS JUSTIFIED IF UNIVERSITY IS TO CONTINUE. IN THIS CONNECTION, IT WORTH NOTING THAT LATEST LIST OF EXPELLEES, WHILE IT CONTAINED 45 JORDANIANS, ALSO INCLUDED 47 LEBANESE, 2

AMERICANS, AND 9 "OTHER" ARABS.

5. NOTE BY AMBASSADOR: A'ARAJ'S COMMENTS RE HIS
SON AND NIECES REMIND ME OF A COLLEGE CLASSMATE'S MOTHER
WRITING TO A YALE DEAN FOLLOWING HER SON'S EXPULSION AFTER
A GLORIOUS DRUNKEN BRAWL: QUOTE I KNOW LIQUOR NEVER
PASSED MY SON'S LIPS. UNQUOTE.
GODLEY

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